

MEMORANDUM

00356

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTION

January 12, 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

MR. KISSINGER

THROUGH:

ALEXANDER M. HAIG, JR.

FROM:

JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE *JH/H*

SUBJECT:

Press Guidance on Intended Chinese
Redefector: LIAO Ho-shu

State and CIA have asked our press guidance on the case of LIAO Ho-shu, the former Charge of the PRC Embassy in the Hague who defected in late 1969. He has been in this country since, but recently has become dissatisfied with life here and wrote the President December 21 that he wanted to return to China. State picked the matter up, and, coordinating with CIA, ascertained from LIAO that he indeed wants to return but has not been able to get a positive response from PRC authorities that they will have him back. (He told State and CIA that he had made contact with the PRC U.N. delegation, but was unable to get a clear response from them.) State and CIA are now considering this aspect of the matter.

At the State noon press briefing yesterday, press spokesman Bray, after denying a report attributed to a Reverend Paul Lindstrom that 59 U.S. POW's had been moved from Laos to China, was asked by the Chicago Tribune correspondent whether Lindstrom's suggestion that the U.S. had agreed to return to China "a Chinese defector at the time or in connection with the President's announcement of his trip to Peking" was true. No reference was made to Liao or any other particular Chinese defector. Bray took the question.

We have approved the press guidance at Tab B to respond to the Chicago Tribune's question. At Tab A is standby press guidance which State would use if asked about Liao specifically. This has been agreed to by State and CIA.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you approve the press guidance at Tab A.

Approve *[Signature]*
Other *[Signature]*

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Mr. LIAO Ho-shu, who defected in 1968 from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China at the Hague and came to the United States, has now informed us of his desire to return to China. We understand that he has also informed the Government of the PRC that he wishes to return.

I call to your attention the standing U.S. Government policy on defectors and re-defectors:

If an individual who has been granted permission to come to our country, and is therefore legally here and in good standing, wishes to repatriate of his own free will, the U.S. Government will respect his wishes and will permit him to do so. We will not forcibly deport or detain any such legally admitted individual.

As regards any suggestion of a connection between a Chinese defector and the President's coming visit to the People's Republic of China, I emphasize, as we have said on many occasions, that neither we nor the PRC authorities have asked or agreed to any pre-conditions in connection with the President's China visit. The timing of Mr. Liao's request was entirely his own. He has assured us that his decision is the result of careful consideration, and that he is fully aware of the possible personal consequences of repatriation.

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We have taken, and will continue to take every precaution to insure that, if Mr. Liao does in fact go back to the PRC, he does so entirely of his own free will. We have not been in touch with the Government of the PRC nor has the PRC been in touch with us on this case. Mr. Liao is free to leave the United States whenever he chooses. His entry into the PRC would be entirely his own business. It is a matter between Mr. Liao and the Government of the People's Republic of China.

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I don't know what gives rise to your question. But I can categorically assure you that we have had no communication or agreement with the Chinese concerning the return of any defector.

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In any case, I wish to emphasize that, as we have said on many occasions, neither we nor the PRC authorities have asked or agreed to any pre-conditions in connection with the President's China visit.

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